



Impact Report

2022-23



trellis
gardening for wellbeing

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Introduction

As another eventful year draws to a close, I am delighted to share a snapshot of our hard work and success stories from April 2022 to March 2023. Despite continued restrictions in the earlier part of the year, there were huge positives to be taken from services we delivered online. It was wonderful, also, finally to be able to meet in person and exchange expertise and inspiration amongst the people in our network again.

One of the big online successes has been our Seminar Series which returned this March, bigger, better and spanning more latitudes than ever. The worldwide connections we're forging, and the experiences shared are extremely important and heartening for everyone in our sector.

Strengthening connections with groups right across the UK, we continued our Professional Development Forum and moved several steps closer to our long-term aim of having a professional body for therapeutic horticulture. This body will answer calls from practitioners and groups across the country in setting standards and increasing opportunities for professional development and recognition in the field.

To celebrate the amazing work of therapeutic gardening groups around the globe, we began planning the very first World Therapeutic Horticulture Day on 18th May. We hope this World Day will shine a much-needed and deserving spotlight on the benefits of therapeutic gardening and the amazing people who dedicate their time to it.

We're continually humbled by the feedback we receive about our services. I hope you'll also feel uplifted by the inspiring stories of joy and wellbeing shared in these pages.

Funding from government sources continued in this year but remains precarious. We hope to see this support stabilise and increase, given the difference therapeutic gardening can make to people's lives and to alleviate the burgeoning health and social care service crises.

It was with great sadness that we said a final goodbye to Trellis trustee, Carol Anderson, at the end of 2022 after a long battle with illness. She was a force of nature and ever-vocal about the beneficial impacts of therapeutic gardening on people's lives, including her own. I will miss Carol very much not just as a guiding light on the board but for the inspirational woman she was. We were very fortunate, however, to welcome Sir Andrew Cubie as Chair during the year and we look forward to Sir Andrew and the rest of the board's continued support and guidance.

During the year we've been heartened and spurred on by the unstinting kindness of our amazing donors. Our sincere thanks go out to all our generous funders and donors for their support. I'd also like to record my sincere gratitude to the staff team, fieldworkers, trustees, patrons, volunteers and particularly all the therapeutic gardening people in our network who make our work so rewarding and worthwhile.

Fiona Thackeray,
CEO

Handwritten signature of Fiona Thackeray in cursive script.

Our Story So Far

Established by a group of experienced practitioners and passionate supporters, Trellis has been supporting therapeutic gardening groups across Scotland for 17 years. We now help a network of around 500 groups to realise their potential.

OUR MISSION

Everyone who needs, or wants to, can have access to good quality therapeutic gardening activities and services.

OUR AIM

To develop a spectrum of excellent support services, representation and guidance to meet the needs of a fast-growing therapeutic gardening sector.

This encompasses:

- skills training, education & workforce development
- good practice sharing
- inspiration & support for start-ups
- professional recognition, codes & policies to define the field & its practice.

OUR PURPOSE

To support practitioners at all levels, via a range of services, to help people improve their wellbeing & quality of life through gardening.

OUR OUTCOMES

By providing our services:

- people who practice therapeutic gardening feel more connected
- practitioners have more confidence to run gardening activities
- practitioners offer accessible, high quality services using their improved therapeutic gardening skills & knowledge

so that everyone who needs, or wants therapeutic gardening, can have access to high quality services, activities and green spaces.

Our impact at a glance



13,500 disabled & disadvantaged people supported to garden



19 projects, supporting 513 people, given in-depth advisory support



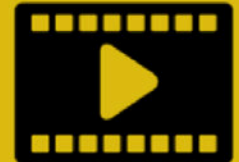
101 gardening packs sent to practitioners



99% of attendees gave our live demonstrations 5★

412 practitioners learning from our live demonstrations

124 queries answered



33 videos created with over 4,000 views across our collection of 99 videos



500 projects in our network



528 registrations across 9 seminars in our International Series



549 hours of online study



Thank you for all of the fabulous training! It's so valuable and I'm putting it to use in various care settings - hospital residential units for elderly, for people with mental health issues, for (people with) intellectual disability, a group for people with early onset dementia and for a cancer support group.

Training & Events

Live Online Demonstrations

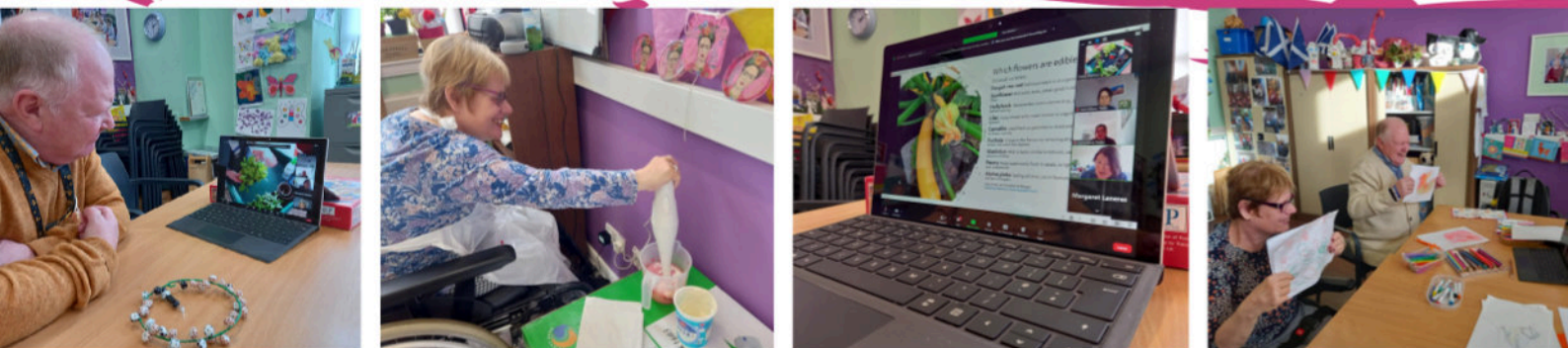
Following another hugely successful year of live online demonstrations with great feedback, we continued to offer this format in 2022-23. Our programme included 20 live demos attended by 412 people covering topics such as patio veg growing, hanging baskets, composting, houseplants, garden art and herbal bath bags. We also worked with a variety of specialists, such as occupational therapists, in presenting the sessions to ensure we could offer high quality information and adaptive tips.

Our sessions continue to attract a significant number of staff at residential, day care and community settings and they are regularly joined by the people in their care. Our online demonstrations receive fantastic reviews and when we ask what changes participants later see in the people they work with, their comments confirm the therapeutic effects of gardening.

The sessions take them (adults with dementia) away from their normal day to day. I notice in sessions they are more relaxed, more smiley, and more engaged.

A sense of achievement when they grow something - increases confidence.

Better mood, and communication, particularly for volunteers with mental health issues or poor self-esteem and we see new friendships between volunteers.



28

live online
gardening
demonstrations

412

attendees at our live
demonstrations

99%

of live demo
attendees gave our
sessions 5*

Training & Events

Live Online Demonstrations (cont.)

In addition, we ran 4 sessions via the Care Inspectorate for staff working in a wide variety of care and care at home settings, 1 for the National Activity Providers Association (NAPA), workshops focused on Deaf Blind Awareness Training and 3 workshops designed specially for care home residents for Vibrant Communities.

We're delighted that our online demonstrations help practitioners to increase their skills and confidence to run therapeutic gardening sessions – a desired outcome for so many of the services we offer. All these live online demonstrations are later uploaded to our YouTube channel so they may be watched and shared whenever time allows – another great resource supporting our network to garden. Here are just a few comments from practitioners about the difference our live demonstrations have made to them, and in turn the disabled and disadvantaged people they support:

Thanks to the sessions and to Joan's clear explanations and comments, I'm now much more confident in the way I support my groups!

Another excellent session has encouraged me to go and try not only with my members but with another group I am going to be working with.

Having the YouTube videos are great as we can reach all of our group who can't attend.

In-person Workshops

We were delighted to be able to reach more people in person in the last year as restrictions eased. During the year we ran 3 workshops for St John's Primary School reaching 81 pupils all learning about growing and harvesting food whilst helping teachers get to grips with running simple gardening activities. We supported Newton House Care Home with 2 workshops, attended by 8 residents each time accompanied by staff who were able to increase their confidence to do gardening and nature-based activities with residents.

Meanwhile we helped a team at HMP Dumfries providing in-depth support including garden design training to help them to realise plans to create a wellbeing garden. We ran 5 workshops with staff and prisoners to increase horticulture skills and improve wellbeing.

Finally we ran gardening sessions for Baillie Gifford carers and neurodiverse staff support groups. The Mindfulness in Nature sessions were attended by 20 staff and offered ideas about ways they could support their own wellbeing at home. Together we planted bulbs (decorating the pots first) and also made herbal bath bags to enjoy!

I've got my bulbs on my kitchen window and every time I do the dishes, I see it and it makes me smile.

Baillie Gifford Carers Group member

Training & Events

Good Practice Sharing Events

After restrictions on running good practice sessions in person for so long it was a real delight once again to be able to give our network members the opportunity to get together and share ideas, knowledge and skills and see how other projects operate through a project visit. We ran 4 sessions helping 112 staff and volunteers at therapeutic gardening projects to forge connections with others in the sector and exchange skills and ideas they will take back and offer to others in their groups.

We held events in Stirling, Balintore, Aviemore and Aberdeen with fantastic feedback.



Both the workshops I attended gave me valuable knowledge which I'll enjoy passing on to others in our community garden.

I feel validated in what I am trying to achieve, less isolated. Energised to proceed with further Trellis Training.



The diversity of all the talks, tours, workshops, stalls, and the super catering that Trellis sorted for the event gives guests a great value and experience of the amazing work you have all been doing.

Training & Events

Online Seasonal Gardening Activities Course

Our online Seasonal Gardening training continues to support those practitioners who have little horticulture knowledge to enhance their basic skills. The courses offer lots of inspiration for activity ideas, together with suggestions for adapting these to meet the needs of their groups.

In the year, 69 people accessed our courses, including our free introductory unit, many of whom are working in NHS and other care settings. This equates to 549 hours of study, increasing practitioners' skills and knowledge and improving the quality of therapeutic gardening provision throughout Scotland.



Thank you for providing the learning content of the course. I have very much valued all the learning and experience from all the seasonal courses and meeting interesting people along the way.

Talks & External Events

Through presentations, we shared our knowledge and passion for therapeutic gardening and the career opportunities in this flourishing sector, both in-person and via online talks:

- An online talk on plastic-free gardening for The Chartered Institute of Horticulture (CIH)
- A live presentation to the CIH AGM at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh about professional development in therapeutic horticulture
- A lecture on therapeutic gardening for Urban Agriculture and Landscaping for Health Students in Sweden
- Hosted interactive workshops and stalls at the Generations Working Together Annual Conference and the Scottish Care Conference.
- Delivered a presentation to the Working For Gardeners Association
- Ran a stall at the Queen Margaret University Music Therapy Conference
- Attended Scone Garden Fair

As a result of this work, 238 more people are now aware of Trellis, the services we offer and the benefits of therapeutic gardening in addition to possible career paths in the sector.

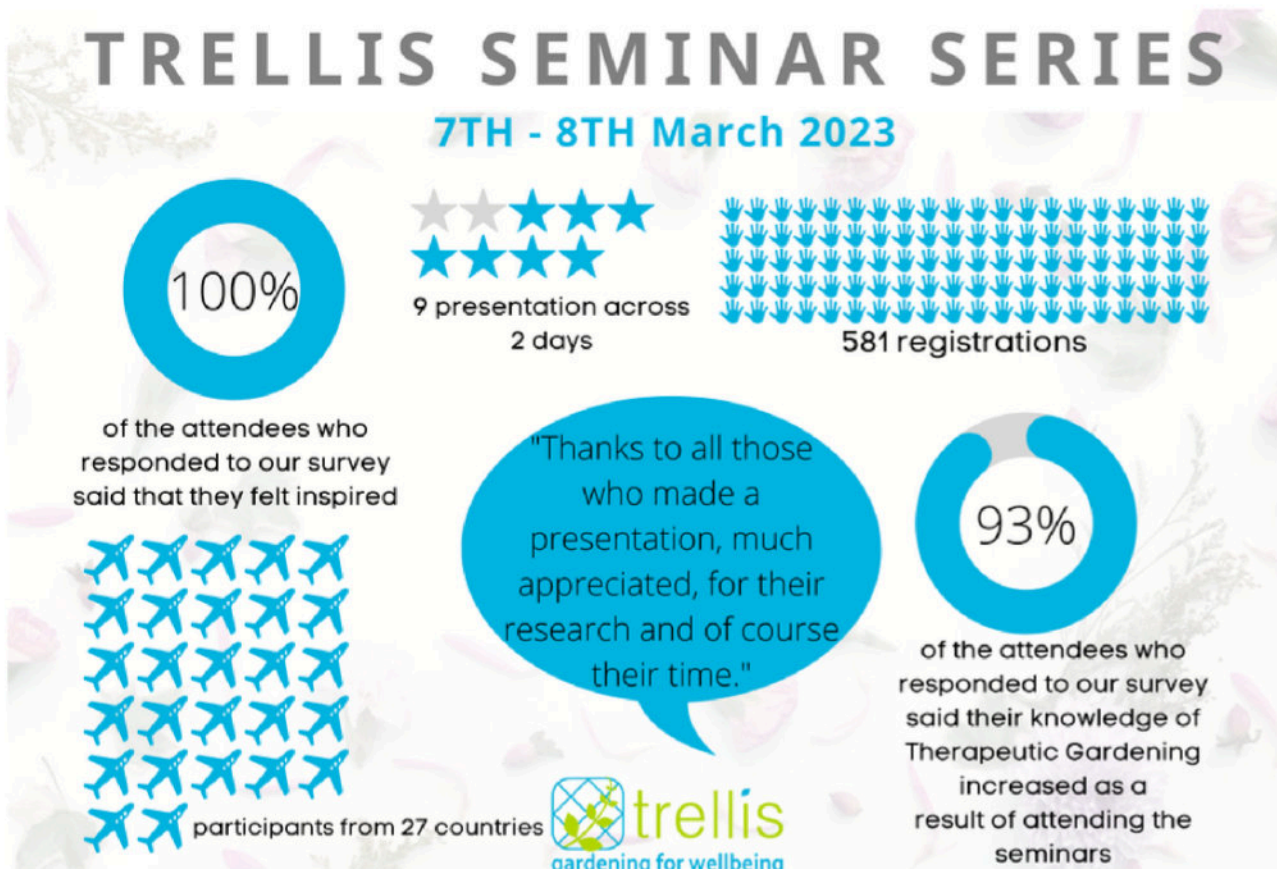


Training & Events

International Seminar Series

Now in its third annual iteration, this event, which arose out of necessity during Covid lock down when meeting in person wasn't possible, has become an established highlight in our year. We were thrilled once again to provide a stimulating and inspiring series of seminars for therapeutic gardeners around the world. It is now firmly stamped on the calendar of the international community of therapeutic gardening practitioners.

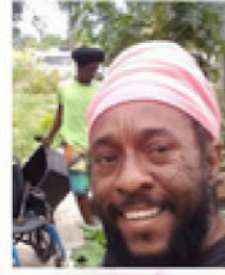
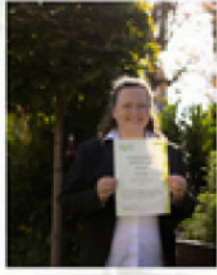
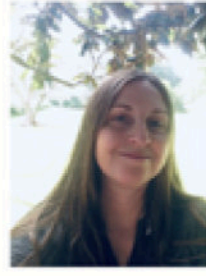
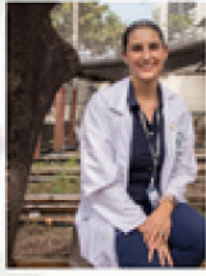
Condensed into a shorter format this year, we had 9 speakers over 2 days sharing their inspiring work. Speakers hailed from Ukraine, Trinidad and Tobago, Iceland, Taiwan, Germany, Ecuador, Austria, Nevis/Guyana/Antigua & Barbuda and the USA. After the event the presentations were uploaded to YouTube so that people unable to attend on the day could watch the sessions at a time to suit. The largest sector attending the sessions were those who support people in mental health recovery.



Whilst most participants reported increasing their knowledge and feeling inspired by the Series, 96% also said they felt less isolated and more connected to the therapeutic gardening network on a worldwide scale.

It is these connections that have helped lead to the creation of a professional development forum and now a professional association in the UK started by Trellis CEO, Fiona Thackeray with practitioners from the field, and to our organising the first ever World Therapeutic Horticulture Day, celebrated on 18th May 2023.

*Thank you again for putting this together.
What an amazing learning opportunity!*



Our 2023 Seminar Series Speakers

Information Services & Resources

Query Service

We responded to 124 queries during the year. As ever, they were hugely varied in content and some progressed to more intensive support provision in collaborations lasting several months.

Queries included requests for help in finding local gardening group contacts, sharing job opportunities, signposting to training opportunities, activity ideas and support with risk assessments as well as guidance for groups wanting to start table-top gardening activities.

Videos and Activity Sheets

We created 24 'how to' videos as well as adding the 9 new Seminar Series recordings to our YouTube channel, bringing our library of informative and inspirational videos to just shy of 100. These videos have had over 4,000 views and we know they're a vital resource for busy practitioners.

We added a further 6 Activity Sheets to our extensive collection available for anyone to access for free on our website. These included sensory activities, activities to increase biodiversity, culinary activities and recipes and softwood cuttings.

6

new activity sheets

99

youtube videos on our channel

124

queries answered

Trellis Books & Publications

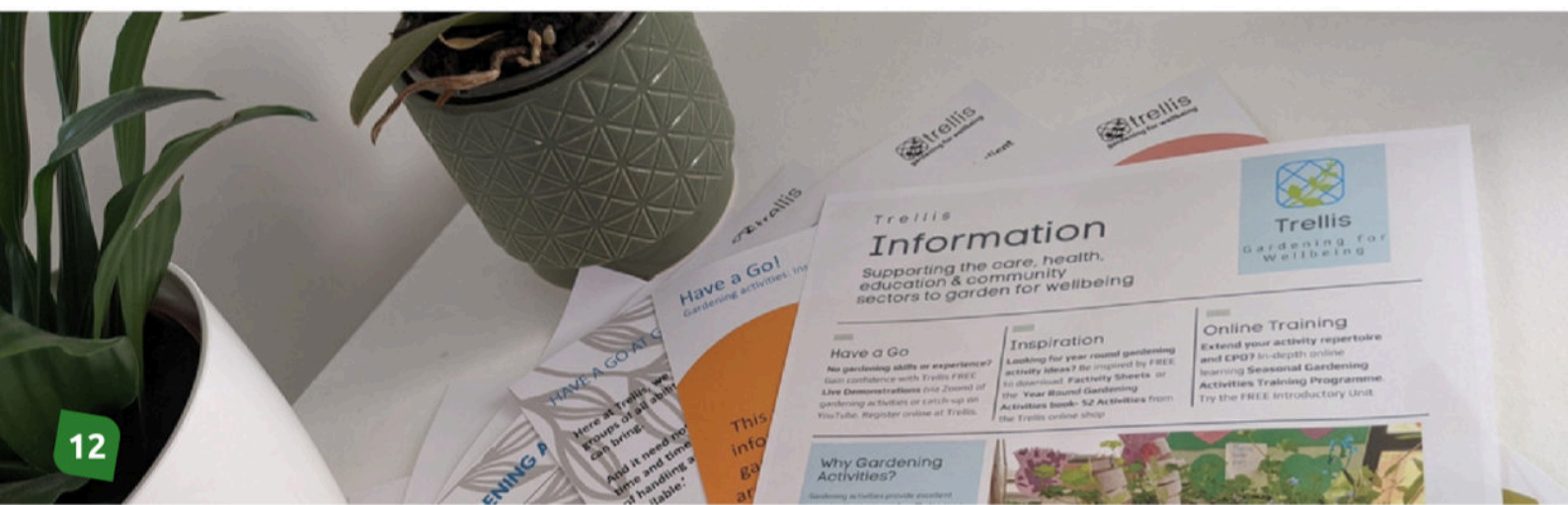
After feedback and external reviews of our *Year-Round Gardening Activities* book, we took delivery of the finished publication in December 2022. The book is organised by season, giving 52 simple yet inspirational ideas for people supporting others to garden or take part in nature connection activities. The book is one of three available in our shop to enhance practitioners' skills and knowledge: *Plastic-free Gardening* and the *Guide to Setting Up a Therapeutic Gardening Project* are also available.

We also created new 'Have a Go' packs. These mini packs of activity ideas were devised to give those who are very new to gardening a taster of the types of activities they could do with the people they support. TV Gardener and Head Gardener at Scone Palace, Brian Cunningham, kindly shared a video review of YRGB on our website and other testimonials from happy customers include:

Absolutely full of great ideas for activities with participants of all ages.

I find the book helpful to refer to for different ideas that are suitable to work with our patients on the ward that have a dementia diagnosis.

We have carried out activities indoors and outdoors in the ward garden.



In depth Support & Professional Development

Advisory Service

In 2022-23 we provided 19 groups with in depth support to start or improve their therapeutic gardening provision. As a result of this support, delivered through our freelance fieldworkers and staff team, 513 **MORE** people enjoyed better quality therapeutic gardening opportunities in their local community.

Towards the end of our financial year, we began a recruitment process to increase the number and geographical spread of our fieldworkers and meet rising demand for this service. We now have fieldworkers located in Glasgow, East Ayrshire, Edinburgh, East Lothian, The Scottish Borders, Falkirk, Fife, Perthshire, Aberdeenshire, Angus and the Highlands. They will be called up to provide a wide variety of support including some significantly more in depth assignments involving multiple visits. Every request is quite different, but might include: garden design, planting plans, adaptive activity ideas for working with people with a specific health condition or training staff to run gardening sessions through onsite workshops (typically run with the beneficiaries, for instance care home residents, joining in the activities from their home setting) – or a combination of all of these!

Amongst the projects that benefitted from this type of in-depth support was Birkhill House Dye Garden in The Scottish Borders.

Birkhill House Dye Garden

The aim of this project was to establish a natural dye garden, growing plants that were to be used to create dyes, as part of the treatment plan for the recovery, healing, and improvement of wellbeing, for women who have experienced violence.

Project process

Fieldworker Emma attended on a weekly/fortnightly basis to help with garden design, the creation of tool and seed lists including researching natural dye plants. This was followed by a series of therapeutic gardening sessions, run by Emma, to create beds to grow the dye plants, a path, and to grow plants from seed in a polytunnel. The seedlings were then transplanted outside to their beds.

Each plant grown has potential for use as a natural dyeing agent, which can ultimately be used with home raised natural sheep and alpaca fibre to create vibrant finished products. Once the garden was established and producing the foliage, flowers, and roots necessary for the dye processes, the women attending the project were taught dyeing skills from natural dye experts and fibre artisans.

Project success

The participants gained experience in the process of growing dye plants, fibre processing, and a variety of artistic techniques. The skills gained have helped to improve mental health and the group continue to care for the garden and make use of the dye plants.

This use of creative engagement through gardening and growing has brought a group of women together and supported them in difficult times to grow, learn and work together.

Emma continues to work freelance with Birkhill and plants and people continue to flourish.



Left: Birkhill House Dye Garden Right: Design image by the Trellis fieldworker team

Professional Development

Practitioners across the sector have called for a professional body dedicated to therapeutic horticulture. They have told us that this is needed urgently and that it should be led by us as the experts in this field. This has been a long-held ambition for Trellis and this year it's been wonderful finally to begin to realise that goal.

We have begun creating the UK professional association for therapeutic horticulture, inviting Thrive, the other lead organisation in this field in the UK to work with us. By sharing our complementary knowledge and resources and aligning our efforts we can achieve more. We're similar organisations with different strengths and a shared objective to see social & therapeutic and horticulture more widely recognised and available to those that can benefit from it.

In creating the UK professional association, we aim to achieve greater recognition for practitioners as well as agreeing quality standards and codes of practice that will assure maximum public benefit. We're working to develop clear career routes and ensure access to work in this field is open to all. In addition to creating practitioner qualifications and accreditation with partners from higher and further education, we plan to expand our range of courses so that there are opportunities for everyone to advance and update their therapeutic practice, including CPD courses and supervision.

If you are interested in joining our group for the development of a Professional Body for Social and Therapeutic Horticulture, please scan the QR code below.



Acknowledgments

Trellis would like to thank the team behind all the hard work and successes illustrated in this impact report:

Staff team:

Lorna Baker, Jo Cook, Emma Martindale, Jenny Simpson, Fiona Thackeray, Sharon Watters and Joan Wilson.

Fieldworkers:

Fiona Brown, Karin Chipulina, Toni Clark, Joanne Evans, Jenny Foulkes, Christina Hughes Nind, Caroline Kerr-Smith, Ruth Mackie, M.T. O'Donnell, Diana Robertson, Richard Trinder, Kate White and Michelle Woodall. Special thanks to Rebecca Dunn, Community Growing Development Worker, CFINE, who helped immensely with our Aberdeen event.

Our staff team have been ably guided by our dedicated trustees and our charitable work wouldn't be possible without our funders, fundraisers, donors and members.

We thank you all most sincerely for helping us to improve people's lives through therapeutic gardening.



Leaving just 1% as a gift to Trellis in your will, means those closest to you will still receive 99%...

And it costs you nothing now. Find out more on our website.



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Trellis is a registered charity with OSCR.
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